



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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Chief Executive Officer

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October 5, 2021

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport
Chief Executive Officer

ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT AGAINST WATER THEFT AND ILLEGAL CANNABIS GROWS IN THE ANTELOPE VALLEY AND ILLEGAL CANNABIS DISPENSARIES IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS (ITEM NO. 10, AGENDA OF JULY 13, 2021)

On July 13, 2021, the Board of Supervisors instructed the Chief Executive Office to report back during the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 Supplemental Budget on potential funding sources for the County to sustain eradication of serious environmental and quality of life nuisance related to illegal cannabis grows, water theft, and illegal dispensaries.

Ongoing funding of \$1.7 million is being recommended in the Supplemental Budget to fund overtime for patrol at the Lancaster station as a deterrent to ongoing water theft (\$503,000), and overtime for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) Marijuana Eradication Team to eliminate illegal cannabis grows (\$1.2 million). In addition, one-time funding of \$707,000 is being recommended primarily for the purchase of ten (10) trucks to conduct investigations related to outdoor grows which are often in rough terrain and dirt roads.

Additionally, a total of \$2.5 million in one-time unspent carryover funding is being recommended in the Supplemental Budget for continued targeted enforcement and patrols of the areas impacted by the massive illegal grows and water theft in the Antelope Valley (\$250,000), and overtime costs associated with LASD's participation in the County's Cannabis Consumer Health and Safety Taskforce (Taskforce) (\$2.2 million). LASD's participation on the Taskforce primarily focuses on combatting illegal dispensaries.

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LASD's FY 2021-22 budget also includes \$500,000 in previously approved grant funding for cannabis eradication efforts from the United States Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration, for participation in the Domestic Cannabis Eradication Suppression Program for non-permitted or unlicensed cannabis plants. Funds are used for overtime and other qualifying expenditures associated with LASD's participation in the program.

It is recommended that LASD continue to explore grant opportunities to expand their ability to combat illegal cannabis grows, water theft, and illegal cannabis dispensaries.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Rene Phillips at (213) 974-1478 or at RPhillips@ceo.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:MM
SW:RP:AP:cc

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Sheriff